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HQ ADCOM PETERSON AFB CO//CC//
HQ USAF WASH DC//RDS//
INFO HQ USAF WASH DC//XOO//XOX//PAX//
JCS WASH DC//JE//JE//
HQ AFSC ANDREWS AFB MD//CC//SD//SDS//
HQ SAC OFFUTT AFB NE//XP//DO//
HQ MAC SCOTT AFB IL//XP//DO//
HQ SANSO LOS ANGELES AFS CA//CC//LV//
YH//YB//
30AEROS VANDENBERG AFB CA//CC//
OLAG DET 4 46ADM LOS ANGELES AFS CA//
XPDL//

SUBJ: MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY

1. REFERENCE:
 - A. AF/RDS LTR, "ATLAS E/F UTILIZATION," 21 MAR 79.
 - B. AF/RDS MSG, "SWITCH OF DMSP TO ATLAS E/F LAUNCH VEHICLE," DTG 1101700Z JUL 79.
2. IN RESPONSE TO REF B, ADCOM HAS IDENTIFIED ADVANTAGES AND

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JAMES E. HILL, General, USAF
Commander in Chief

James E. Hill

1979
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DISADVANTAGES OTHER THAN COST OF TRANSFERRING THE DEFENSE METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITE PROGRAM (DNSP) FROM THOR TO ATLAS. SINCE DNSP IS THE ONLY USER OF THE MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH SERVICES PRESENTLY PROVIDED BY ADCOM, SUCCESSFUL ACTION TRANSFERRING DNSP TO ATLAS CONTRACTOR LAUNCH WILL IMPACT CURRENT AND FUTURE MILITARY SPACE ACTIVITIES. THEREFORE, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS INCLUDED TO IDENTIFY THE REAL ISSUE AT HAND - WHETHER THE POLICY WHICH ESTABLISHED THE REQUIREMENT OF CONTINUING A MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY IS TO BE CHANGED. THIS POLICY QUESTION WAS ANSWERED BY THE CONSCIOUS DECISION TO MAINTAIN MILITARY LAUNCH OF DNSP AFTER THE TERMINATION OF PROGRAM 437 IN 1975 AND WAS RECONFIRMED LAST YEAR BY GENERAL SLAY, AFSC/CC, WHEN HE DIRECTED DNSP TO MAINTAIN ITS BASELINE PROGRAM (I.E., MILITARY LAUNCH OF DNSP UNTIL PROGRAM TRANSITION TO SHUTTLE). THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON FOR THESE DECISIONS WAS TO PROVIDE A CADRE OF TRAINED PERSONNEL TO ASSUME FUTURE OPERATIONAL MILITARY SPACE MISSIONS. THE INFORMATION BELOW PROVIDES JUSTIFICATION FOR A MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY.

3. BACKGROUND: THE SPACE SUPPORT PROGRAM (SSP) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE TASKS ADCOM TO PROVIDE THOR LAUNCH SERVICES TO

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APPROVED SATELLITE PROGRAMS. THE 10TH AEROSPACE DEFENSE SQUADRON (10 AERODS) VANDENBERG AFB, CA, IS THE ADCOM UNIT WHICH PROVIDES THE LAUNCH SERVICES. THE 10 AERODS SUCCESS RATE IS 97% OR 34 OUT OF 35 THOR LAUNCHES; 22 OF WHICH HAVE BEEN FOR DMSP. UNDER THE SSP, ADCOM IS ALLOCATED 11 THOR BOOSTERS, SIX OF WHICH ARE TO BE USED IN SUPPORT OF DMSP UNTIL ITS PROJECTED TRANSITION TO THE SHUTTLE IN FY 86. THE FIVE REMAINING BOOSTERS ARE SURPLUS TO PROGRAM 437 AND NO USER HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED. SINCE DMSP IS CURRENTLY THE ONLY USER OF 10 AERODS SPACE LAUNCH SERVICES, SUCCESSFUL ACTION TRANSFERRING DMSP TO ATLAS CONTRACTOR OPERATIONS ABROGATES AIR FORCE POLICY TO MAINTAIN A MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY.

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- 5- ADVANTAGES OF TRANSFERRING BMSP TO ATLAS:
- A- INCREASED THRUST TO WEIGHT RATIO OF THE ATLAS WOULD ALLOW MORE POTENTIAL FOR SATELLITE GROWTH.
- B- SINCE BMSP (BLOCK 5D-2) IS SIMILAR TO THE ATLAS LAUNCHED

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TITUS-W SPACECRAFT ONLY MINOR MODIFICATIONS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO LAUNCH DMSP ON ATLAS. FURTHER, THE DOD POLICY OF "CONVERGENCE" OF SIMILAR SATELLITE PROGRAMS COULD BE REALIZED, THUS DELETING THE NEED FOR DMSP AS A PROGRAM UNTO ITSELF.

- G. DISADVANTAGES OF TRANSFERRING DMSP TO ATLAS:
 - A. POSSIBLE LOSS OF THE AIR FORCE SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY UNLESS ADDITIONAL SPACE LAUNCH OR SPACE DEFENSE MISSIONS ARE ASSIGNED.
 - B. USE OF FIVE ATLAS E/F BOOSTERS WHICH MIGHT BE BETTER UTILIZED AS A CONTINGENCY FOR HEAVIER SPACECRAFT IN THE EVENT OF FURTHER SHUTTLE SCHEDULE SLIPS.
 - C. ULTIMATE LOSS OF A TRAINING ENVIRONMENT WHERE MILITARY PERSONNEL RECEIVE HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE IN SPACE LAUNCH ENGINEERING, PLANNING, MAINTENANCE AND BOOSTER/SPACECRAFT LIVE-LAUNCH OPERATIONS.
 - D. THE TRANSFER WOULD CAUSE A TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON AEROSPACE CONTRACTORS FOR EXPENDABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE AND SHUTTLE LAUNCH OPERATIONS.

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- F. REQUIRES CHANGE TO AIR FORCE POLICY CONTRARY TO EXISTING GUIDANCE PREVIOUSLY REFERENCED.
- 7. STATUS QUO ADVANTAGES:
 - A. CONTINUED THOR/DNSP OPERATIONS FOLLOWS ESTABLISHED POLICY TO MAINTAIN A MILITARY SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITY AND GUARANTEES ITS EXISTENCE UNTIL DNSP TRANSITIONS TO SHUTTLE.
 - B. RETAINS SKILLS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT BOTH R&D AND OPERATIONAL MISSIONS.
 - C. PROVIDES UNIQUE CAPABILITY TO TRANSITION R&D SPACE LAUNCH/ DEFENSE PROGRAM TO AN OPERATIONAL WEAPON SYSTEM.
 - 6. MANPOWER: THE LOAEROPS CURRENT MANPOWER AUTHORIZATION I.E., 10 OFFICERS; 7 CIVILIANS; AND 108 AIRMEN; IS THE NUCLEUS NEEDED TO SUPPORT THE VARIOUS MISSIONS STATED ABOVE; THEREFORE, TRANSITIONING DNSP TO ATLAS CONTRACTOR LAUNCH OPERATIONS WILL NOT RESULT IN MANPOWER SAVINGS OVER THE LONG TERM.
 - 9. OUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE COST DELTA METHOD USED TO EVALUATE THE LAST SERIES OF DNSP WEIGHT GROWTH BRIEFINGS INDICATE THAT ANOTHER COSTING EVALUATION METHOD WOULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL IN EXAMINING ALL ALTERNATIVES. RECOMMEND AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS BE

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ACCOMPLISHED IAW AFR 178-1 TO EVALUATE ALL THE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES
AND AID IN MAKING A DECISION ON THIS SUBJECT. ADCOM PERSONNEL WILL
BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING THIS ANALYSIS. IN ADDITION,
A BRIEFING IS ALSO AVAILABLE WHICH DISCUSSES THE FUTURE MISSIONS
OF THE AIR FORCE LAUNCH CAPABILITY.

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